



Appl. No.: 10/634,312
Reply to Office Action of: 5/10/2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) A terminal block comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to the housing, the circuit substrate having a first side with a ground area and a second side with circuit tracks;

signal contacts connected to the circuit tracks;

a ground contact connected to the housing, wherein the ground contact is electrically coupled to the ground area and comprises an outwardly projecting contact lip extending in a direction away from the ground area of the circuit substrate, and wherein the ground contact is adapted to directly contact a ground area of another terminal block placed against the ground contact.

14. (Currently amended) A terminal block ~~as in claim 13~~ comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to the housing, the circuit substrate having a first side with a ground area and a second side with circuit tracks;

signal contacts connected to the circuit tracks;

a ground contact connected to the housing, wherein the ground contact is electrically coupled to the ground area and comprises an outwardly projecting contact lip extending in a direction away from the ground area of the circuit substrate, and wherein the ground contact is adapted to directly contact a ground area of another terminal block placed against the ground contact,

wherein the ground contact comprises a shielding contact blade between a pair of the signal contacts.

15. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 14 wherein a front end of the contact blade forms a contact end adapted for making an electrical connection with a ground contact of a mating electrical connector.

16. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 14 wherein the ground contact comprises insulating material overmolded onto the shielding contact blade.

17. (Currently amended) A terminal block ~~as in claim 13~~ comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to the housing, the circuit substrate having a first side with a ground area and a second side with circuit tracks;

signal contacts connected to the circuit tracks;

a ground contact connected to the housing, wherein the ground contact is electrically coupled to the ground area and comprises an outwardly projecting contact lip extending in a direction away from the ground area of the circuit substrate, and wherein the ground contact is adapted to directly contact a ground area of another terminal block placed against the ground contact,

wherein the ground contact comprises a circuit substrate contact lip connected to a solder island on the second side of the circuit substrate.

18. (Currently amended) A terminal block ~~as in claim 13~~ comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to the housing, the circuit substrate having a first side with a ground area and a second side with circuit tracks;

signal contacts connected to the circuit tracks;

a ground contact connected to the housing, wherein the ground contact is electrically coupled to the ground area and comprises an outwardly projecting contact lip extending in a direction away from the ground area of the circuit substrate, and wherein the ground contact is adapted to directly contact a ground area of another terminal block placed against the ground contact,

wherein the outwardly projecting contact lip comprises a resiliently deflectable spring section.

19. (Currently amended) A terminal block ~~as in claim 13~~
comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to the housing, the circuit
substrate having a first side with a ground area and a
second side with circuit tracks;

signal contacts connected to the circuit tracks;

a ground contact connected to the housing, wherein the
ground contact is electrically coupled to the ground area
and comprises an outwardly projecting contact lip
extending in a direction away from the ground area of the
circuit substrate, and wherein the ground contact is
adapted to directly contact a ground area of another
terminal block placed against the ground contact,

wherein the ground contact comprises a contact spring
adapted to contact a contact lip of a mating electrical
connector.

20. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 13
wherein the ground contact comprises a shielding section
extending across a width of the housing.

21. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 20
wherein the shielding section extends along portions of
exterior lateral sides of the housing.

22. (Previously presented) An electrical cable connector
comprising:

a first terminal block comprising a terminal block as in **claim 13**; and

a second terminal block comprising a terminal block as in **claim 13**, wherein the second terminal block is connected to the first terminal block in a general stacked configuration, and wherein the outwardly projecting contact lip of the first terminal block is directly connected to the ground area of the circuit substrate of the second terminal block.

23. (Previously presented) An electrical connector assembly comprising:

an electrical cable connector as in **claim 22**; and

a mating electrical connector connected to the electrical cable connector, wherein the mating electrical connector comprises a plurality of right-angled contact elements arranged in rows and columns, and at least one right-angled shielding plate arranged between two adjacent rows of the contact elements.

24. (Previously presented) An electrical connector assembly as in claim 23 wherein the mating electrical connector comprises a vertical shielding plate, wherein the right-angled shielding plate and the vertical shielding plate are provided with slots receiving the vertical and right-angled shielding plates, respectively, wherein contact parts are provided for interconnecting the right-angled and vertical shielding plates, and wherein a plurality of the ground contacts contact a contact lip of one of the shielding plates.

25. (Currently amended) A terminal block comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to a first side of the housing, the circuit substrate comprising a ground layer with at least one contact area on a first outwardly facing side of the circuit substrate and circuit tracks with a plurality of solder islands on an opposite second side of the circuit substrate;

signal contacts located in the housing and connected to the solder islands; and

at least one ground contact having at least a portion located inside the housing and located against the second side of the circuit substrate, the a at least one ground contact being electrically coupled to the ground layer of the circuit substrate, wherein the at least one ground contact comprises a contact lip extending past a second side of the housing and adapted to contact a contact area of a ground layer of another terminal block subsequently located against the housing at the contact lip, and a portion adapted to contact a ground contact in a mating electrical connector.

26. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 25 wherein the ground contact comprises a vertical shielding contact blade with a contact end forming the portion for contacting a mating electrical connector.

27. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 25 wherein the portion of the ground contact located against the

second side of the circuit substrate comprises a contact lip connected to one of the solder islands on the circuit substrate to electrically couple the ground contact to the ground layer.

28. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 25 wherein the contact lip of the ground contact which extends past the second side of the housing comprises a spring deflectable contact lip.

29. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 25 wherein the portion adapted to contact a ground contact in a mating electrical connector comprises a contact spring adapted to contact a contact lip of the mating electrical connector.

30. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 25 wherein the ground contact comprises a shielding section extending across a width of the housing.

31. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 30 wherein the shielding section extends along portions of exterior lateral sides of the housing.

32. (Previously presented) A terminal block comprising:

a housing;

a circuit substrate connected to a first side of the housing and having a ground layer on a first outwardly facing side of the circuit substrate;

signal contacts connected to the circuit substrate; and

a plurality of ground contacts connected to the circuit substrate and electrically coupled to the ground layer, the ground contacts each comprising a vertical shielding contact blade with a front contact end for contacting a mating connector, and a spring type contact lip extending beyond a second opposite side of the housing, wherein the contact lips are adapted to electrically couple the ground contacts to another terminal block stacked onto the second side of the housing.

33. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 32 wherein the ground contact comprises a contact lip connected to a solder island on a second opposite side of the circuit substrate to electrically couple the ground contact to the ground layer.

34. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 32 wherein the ground contact comprises a shielding section extending across a width of the housing.

35. (Previously presented) A terminal block as in claim 34 wherein the shielding section extends along portions of exterior lateral sides of the housing.